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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0115

06/11/99

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->From the Editor's Keyboard
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"Saying it like it is!"

What a terrific week it's been with regard to the weather! Okay, the first of the week gave us record-breaking heat, but mid-week until now has been gorgeous. I hope that this continues!

Most of my outdoor spring work has been completed, finally. I'll be putting in my vegetables this weekend. The pool is almost open, but we're waiting for someone to check out the pump since it appears it isn't working efficiently. No big deal as the water is still too cold for my tastes! A little weeding in the flower gardens and I'll be all set for the routine stuff. Throughout the rest of the spring and summer I'll be doing some re-seeding of parts of the lawn, but nothing needing done immediately. The barbecue has been getting a workout, thankfully! I hope that the next five months drag, just to be able to enjoy every minute of my favorite times of the year.

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Atari User Groups Notes
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June CACUG Meeting

The June 21, meeting of CACUG (Cleveland Atari Classics User Group) will be open to all Atari platforms. It will be held at the Peoples Community Church, at 631 North Rocky River Drive in Berea, Ohio at 7:30PM. All are welcome to attend. A general Falcon030 demo will be done.

Thank you,
Martin Quinones
President CACUG

For more info or directions please contact

Martin Quinones : ak527@cleveland.freenet.edu
or
Jim Krych : ab453@cleveland.freenet.edu

Or come visit us via the Internet at
telnet to: freenet-in-c.cwru.edu
once connected type "go atari" and

enjoy. You can also dial direct at
216-368-3888.

TAF Meeting June 16th - Mario Becroft's Marvels!

From: Daniel L. Dreibelbis <dreibel@idirect.com>

Agenda for the June 16th, 1999 meeting of the Toronto Atari Federation:

As your classic Atari ST/TT/Falcon gets older, you may find that certain parts of your system may need replacing. Is your mouse getting tired? Has your mono monitor faded to black? Has your SH hard drive spun down for the last time? Where am I going to find replacements?

At this particular meeting you'll find the perfect solution to these questions, as we'll be showing off and doing demos of three products done by the young New Zealand genius Mario Becroft that solves these problems nicely!

Astound! at the sight of attaching a PC three-button mouse to your ST via the Mouse Adaptor and make it perform double-clicks with one click of the central button! (Also makes a great gift for Amiga users!) Thrill! at getting a nice clear SVGA monitor screen via the VGA Adaptor - mere plug & play! AND! Prepare for the biggest surprise as we show you how to put a notebook IDE drive INSIDE your ST/STe's case via the new IDE Adaptor (which also opens some interesting possibilities - how about putting an iMation SuperDrive inside your ST for starters?)

If you've been worried about replacing mice, monitors or hard drives, this meeting is a MUST-ATTEND spectacle of technological marvel! See you there!

TORONTO ATARI FEDERATION meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month from Sept-June in the "Gold Room" of the North York Memorial Hall located in the lower or concourse level of the North York City Centre Library Building at 5110 Yonge Street (next to Mel Lastman Square) at Parkholme Avenue. Those coming by public transport can take the TTC Yonge Line north to North York Centre Station. \$2 for non-members. Dues are \$25 per year, and includes a subscription to the newsletter PHOENIX. Membership in TAF IS Atari support!

Ken MacDonald, president: anarkist@idirect.com, 416-533-0504
Dan Dreibelbis, Vice-President: dreibel@idirect.com 416-766-4743
TAF Online! BBS (now free to any Atarian!) 416-421-8999 (28.8, 8-N-1)
TAF homepage - <http://taf.atari.org>

TAF/TPUG joint Flea Market June 19th in Toronto!

From: Daniel L. Dreibelbis <dreibel@idirect.com>

TPUG AND TAF JOIN FORCES FOR A DAY OF EXCITING BARGAINS IN TORONTO!

The Toronto Pet Users Group (THE support group for users of Commodore's PET, VIC 10/20, 64 and 128, and the Amiga) and Toronto Atari Federation

(North America's largest user group for the Atari enthusiast) are holding a joint Flea Market at the Alderwood United Church, 44 Delma Drive in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on Saturday June 19th from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. If you own any of these classic computer systems and have been looking for hardware or software, or you have systems or software that you'd like to sell, now's your chance. Sell your old stuff, go home with a treasure!

The days of rivalry between the two competing systems are over, and users of both these platforms realize that it is better to cooperate rather than to butt heads. And indeed, with the Amiga's strengths in audio and graphics, and the ST/TT/Falcon's strengths in MIDI and DTP (not to mention the fact that both platforms make excellent and cheap machines for getting on and making use of the Internet) there is much that can be learned and shared between the two platforms by their respective users.

TAF will be there with copies of ST+ Fanzine for sale and with a number of Mario Becroft's excellent new products for adapting PC serial mice, VGA/SVGA adaptors and internal IDE drives to Atari STs (the Mouse Adaptor also works with the Amiga, so if you've got an Amiga with a dying mouse here's your chance to use one of the many excellent two and three-button mice available to the PC with your system), as well as info on how to join TAF.

It's going to be an exciting summer - and this will be the event to kick it off! See you there!

TORONTO ATARI FEDERATION meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month from Sept-June in the "Gold Room" of the North York Memorial Hall located in the lower or concourse level of the North York City Centre Library Building at 5110 Yonge Street (next to Mel Lastman Square) at Parkholme Avenue. Those coming by public transport can take the TTC Yonge Line north to North York Centre Station. \$2 for non-members. Dues are \$25 per year, and includes a subscription to the newsletter PHOENIX. Membership in TAF IS Atari support!

For more info on this or other Atari-related subjects, get in touch with us at the following:

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TAF homepage - <http://taf.atari.org>

YAC, Yolo Atari Club - Meeting June 26th, Davis CA

From: William Kendrick <nbs@sonic.net>

WHAT:

YAC: Yolo Atari Club

WHEN:

Saturday, June 19th, 1999
1:00pm

WHERE:

Lamppost Pizza
1260 Lake Blvd # 113
Davis, CA 95616
530-758-1111

WHY:

Demonstrations will include:
* Atari Jaguar Games

HOW:

For more (albeit old) information about YAC, visit the YAC website:
<http://vme.net/dvm/yac/>
If you have questions, please contact Bill Kendrick at:
bill@newbreedsoftware.com

Atari Video Club

The next net meeting at Irc Efnet Ch#atarivideoclub ,AVC web chat room
(link is located at AVC online meetings page) and on ICQ from 5pm(ct) till
9pm (ct) on June 12th.

Topics: submit your high scores for our high score contest (see Atarimania
page at our web site for more information) or you could sign up as an
e-zine member if you're not a member and vote for the AtariMania game to be
used at fest'99 (this will be the last time to vote)

Dan@AVC}
AVC online=<http://avconline.atari.org>
(ICQ #14050168)

Got user group announcements? Send them to A-ONE and we'll include
them in upcoming issues!

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->From the Other Editor's Desk
~~~~~

Joe Mirando, Managing Editor  
[jmirando@portone.com](mailto:jmirando@portone.com)

=~==~==

PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I don't know about any of you, but I wish I had never mentioned the nice, gentle, gradual spring warming trend that I was looking forward to.

Since I mentioned it two weeks ago, the temperature here has been uniformly above average. To make things even worse, the humidity has been oppressive. And the next person to inform me that "it's not the heat, it's the humidity" is going to get a slap in the head. Who says that this weather is getting to me?? <grin>

At any rate, I'm still here. Perusing the UseNet, reading about what others are thinking, and finding that there are still new thoughts to think. I think it was Harry Truman who said the only thing that's new is the history you don't already know. (My apologies to good ol' Give 'Em Hell Harry for butchering the phrase). My point though, is that he was wrong. History is important, but it's the application of what we've learned that's important. I've always made a distinction between knowledge and information. Information is the laundry list of what's going on. Knowledge is why it's going on. If you understand the 'why', you stand a better chance of stepping around the pitfalls that await you. If you don't, you may well be doomed to wonder what went wrong ad-infinitum.

Well, enough of that. Let's get on with the reason for this column... all the news, hints, tips, and info on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
=====

The Technoid Mutant asks for help with hard drive partitions:

"When I used MiNT .095 I could use partitions up to 256mb. I now need to access BGM partitions under TOS 1.2. I have an ICD Link II interface and am using ICD drivers as I am unaware of any (free) replacement drivers. The adscsi manual that came with my link II says I can use BGM partitions but TOS won't mount them. What do I do?"

Robert Shaffner tells The Mutant:

"HDDriver:

Partition size with TOS

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| TOS 1.00 - 1.02 | 256 MByte                    |
| TOS 1.04 - 3.xx | 512 Mbyte                    |
| TOS 4.0x        | 1024 MByte                   |
| MagiC / BigDOS  | 1024 MByte                   |
|                 | 2048 MByte (DOS-Kompatibel)" |

Ronald Andersson tells Technoid:

"You should be able to use BGM partitions for secondary partitions, but not for the boot partition. That needs to be a GEM partition, and it has to be the 'old' GEM partition type, not the TOS 1.04 type. Settings for that exist in the ICD partitioning dialogs, but I don't remember the exact terms they used now.

This means that the boot drive will be limited in size to 16 or 32 MB, I don't remember which right now.

Also, if you make more than three partitions on a drive with ICD software, then those further partitions will not be accessible from AHDI or HDDriver software, as ICD used their own scheme for extra partitions. This may be important if/when you decide to switch to using HDDriver in the future."

Steve Stupple asks Ronald:

"Do these rules apply under normal TOS?"

Julian Reschke (the author of SPIN), adds this tidbit:

"Old versions of MiNT do not change the partition size limits, as they go through TOS to access the filesystems. So if you were able to use these partitions with MiNT, you should also be able to use them without...

There is nothing like a "TOS 1.04" type.

BGM partitions work for boot partitions in AHDI, CBHD, HuSHI and other drivers. If they don't with ICD's software, it's a bug in their driver."

Ronald tells Julian:

"There is nothing like a "TOS 1.04" type.

BGM partitions work for boot partitions in AHDI, CBHD, HuSHI and other drivers. If they don't with ICD's software, it's a bug in their driver.

...TOS earlier than TOS 1.04 used signed numbers in the FAT, which made full use of the potential size of partitions impossible. That was especially limiting for GEM partitions as they can only use a logical sector size of 512 bytes."

Peter West jumps in and posts:

"No I don't think the rules apply under normal TOS - I have a drive partitioned with ICD to 7 parts and containing an ICD driver for use on my STFM; when I connect it to the Falcon's SCSI bus, where the Falcon boots from HDDRIVER on its internal 4-partition IDE, it has no problems recognizing all 7 external partitions - plus three more on an EZ135.

The one advantage of the ICD Pro software is that you get an extra program that allows you to move around the order of the partitions, even between drives. With HDDRIVER you can only move the order of the devices but not partitions between drives. I asked Uwe if he couldn't implement this, but he said I was the only one who'd ever asked for it, so no go!

It may seem a strange thing to do, but in my case it should allow me to have two independent C: drives, each with their appropriate boot managers (XBoot and Stoop), AUTOs and ACCs - one for the STFM which boots from the

external drive and one for the Falcon which boots from the internal IDE. By arranging the order of drives so that my old D: to I: come straight after C: on the IDE but before the rest of its partitions when using the Falcon, I should be able to retain the same paths and env variables in many of my programs. I haven't tried it yet - and this does assume that the new partition info is written to the driver on the booting disk and not on the disk partition lead-ins - otherwise one couldn't have two different drive-letter orders. We'll see!

Of course, it might be simpler to just buy a bigger internal IDE than the present 82 MB and transfer everything to that!"

Ronald Andersson posts:

"Hello everyone,

I've just uploaded version 1.0 of my STinG EZ-IP clients to my homepage. ST-Guide HYP file is included, both in the archive and readable from the homepage."

Terry May asks:

"Um...what's an EZ-IP client?"

Steve Sweet mirrors Terry's question:

"Pardon me for being as thick as dog waste, but what the hell are these for?."

Since I've a small (very small) amount of knowledge on the subject, I tell Steve:

"These will enable you or I to actually run a web server with a minimum of hassle right from our Atari 'puters.

The way it works is that people access your server via EZ-IP, which re-directs them to your IP number. The problem has been that most of us have dynamic IP numbers rather than static.

When you run the first client, you are telling EZ-IP what your IP number is for the current session. EZ-IP then can re-direct visitors to your server quickly and easily. Of course, you need to set up a subdomain with EZ-IP first, but that's pretty easy from what I've heard.

From what I understand, you don't really need these clients, as you can tell EZ-IP what your IP number is 'manually'. But this makes it automatic.

The other client, I believe, is to tell EZ-IP that your server is no longer connected.

Using Oliver Booklage's <sp?> web server, you can actually run your own server and make it easy for people to get there by using an EZ-IP URL...

I'm sure that either Ronald Andersson or Rob Mahlert will fill in the gaping holes I've left in the process, but that's the gist of it.

Oh, and by the way... if THAT was dog waste, I've stepped in MUCH larger piles than that, so don't worry about it. <smile>"



As I had hoped, Ronald Andersson jumps in and clarifies:

"EZ-IP is a special service that allows all users of dynamic IP's to have a static name of their own, that other Internet users can use to access that user's machine. It is thus a way of making your local servers accessible to your friends over Internet when you are logged on.

With the new clients STinG users can easily make use of this service. All info is available in an ST-Guide hypertext on my STinG pages, so browse there and check it out if you are interested."

Martin Graiter posts that he...

"Heard some rumour that there might be a TT version of the Centurbo board. Could this be correct? And may we expect an ST version as well?"

Maurits van de Kamp tells Martin:

"They did consider a TT Centurbo for a while, but they gave up. As they put it, the CT2 for the Falcon is the last bit of Atari development they've done, from now on it's only Phenix stuff.

Just buy a Hades060"

Martin-Eric Racine adds:

"Apparently, they abandoned because they found fewer interested buyers than for the Falcon CT2.

Then again, for some developers, it seems to me that simple math is impossible for them. I recall reading that 18000 TTs were produced, compared to about 5000 Falcons. It should be simple enough to figure out which one has the best market potential, then...."

Ronald Hall asks about installing MiNT:

"Okay, I grabbed the cron 3 archive from ftp.funet.fi and am trying to get it working. Setup seems pretty straight forward, but...

I have:

```
/var/cron/tab/root
/var/cron/log
(I'm not using the allow or deny files)

/usr/sbin/cron
/usr/bin/crontab

(all the man pages are installed, come up fine)
```

I also changed my /etc/rc file:

Below (commented out) is the old crond entry:

```
#if [ -f /usr/etc/crond ]; then
#  (cd /var/spool/cron; crond > /dev/null 2>&1 &)
#  echo -n " crond"
#fi
```

And this is the new cron entry:

```
if [ -x /usr/sbin/cron ]; then
    echo -n " cron"
fi
```

When I bootup, cron shows up as there-during the logon sequence, but then 'echo -n " cron"' would show that, right? I can do a ps and cron does not show up. I run crontab -e, setup what I want it to do, and then wait. Nothing happens at all. (which is some what of an improvement-the old crond version crashed)

Here is my tab file for root:

```
# DO NOT EDIT THIS FILE - edit the master and reinstall.
# (/tmp/crontab.121 installed on Thu Jun  3 11:50:46 1999)
# (Cron version -- $Id: crontab.c,v 2.13 1994/01/17 03:20:37 vixie Exp $)
55 11 * * * * echo "This is a test!"
```

As you can see, I was trying to get it to print out the line "This is a test!" at 11:55am, any day, week, month, day of the week, etc,....

Anyone have any ideas?...

Hmm...okay, when I printed the README!.MINT file out, I apparently lost some stuff. The new cron entry should have been:

```
if [ -x /usr/sbin/cron ]; then
    UNIXMODE="/brUs"; export UNIXMODE
    (cd /var/cron && /usr/sbin/cron >&/dev/null || echo "/etc/rc: cannot cd to
/var/cron")
    echo -n " cron"
fi
```

So I'm thinking, "ah-ha" but sorry, this did not work either. I changed my /etc/rc file to reflect the new cron entry, and it won't even boot up like its supposed to. Using the above, I get this error:

```
/etc/rc number 59 syntax error; fd number.
```

Well, that's where I am right now..."

Thomas Binder tells Ronald:

```
"cd /var/cron && /usr/sbin/cron >&/dev/null
      ^
```

I've marked your error above. Your script is trying to redirect stdout to a file descriptor with the "number" /dev/null, which of course is not a number. Remove the ampersand and it should work."

Ronald tells Thomas:

" Okay, I'll try that...thanks! Hmm...so the double ampersand is okay?

Hi Thomas. Okay, I removed the offending ampersand, and the script does run okay now, with no errors. I'm still not sure if cron is working right though. Where should the output go from this instruction? (it seemed to run, but I got nothing on stdout or /dev/console)"

Derek P. asks for info for a friend:

"I have a friend whose Atari STE has a dead internal floppy disk drive. I wondered if anyone could help answer a couple of questions?

1. Is it possible to read files saved on the Atari in 1st Word Plus on a PC? If not, can these files be resaved by a third party's STE in such a way that they can be read by a PC?

2. Can anyone recommend a reliable repair centre in the UK (preferably Scotland) who will repair or replace the faulty disk drive?

Many thanks for your assistance."

John Whalley tells Derek:

"You might have trouble finding a PC program that can read 1WP files, but there are several ways to convert them over if you have access to an Atari. I have a page up on the web about this at:

[http://www.whalley.demon.co.uk/atari/texts/wp\\_help.html](http://www.whalley.demon.co.uk/atari/texts/wp_help.html)

Note that this page doesn't mention (yet) the Marcel word processor which handles RTF conversions (available from FTP sites). I suspect your best bet would be the 1WP2RTF utility (try the Umich mirror at [sunsite.doc.ic.ac.uk](http://sunsite.doc.ic.ac.uk))."

Dave Lumb asks for info for one of his friends:

"A mate of mine has an Atari ST - not sure what model it is. Do you know if they are year 2000 compliant including the standard software you get when you buy a system. I don't know anything about ST's so sorry I'm a bit vague. If more info is needed ask me what you need to know and I'll find out."

The last word on all things technical in the ST world, Nick Bales, tells Dave:

"Unless it's a Mega ST, it won't even have a real time clock, so unless you bother setting the time each time you boot up it won't even know what time it is, let alone the date! If it does have a clock, it will go happily on ticking until 2028 or something.

As for the software, well, it depends. None of the software I use even uses the internal date, but I guess any accounting or database stuff might have the bug.

This is in the Quick FAQ by the way..."

The curator of my favorite MagiC related page, Bengy Collins, posts:

"You can now download the completely translated, english RSCS for:

ASH Emailer 2.x

and

I-Connect/I-Config 1.7

The translator has done a very nice job and my thanks go to Derryck Croker of the Chestnut Computer Club."

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

Okay, I've been around the Atari scene for a long time. Although the term "classic gaming" reflects all platforms, Atari was at the forefront. I've been to Atari shows. I've spoken at-length to a number of show organizers over the years. I've helped to organize an AtariFest of our own, locally. People like Nolan Bushnell don't create news - they are the news! Bushnell's camp didn't announce his appearance at CGE, the show organizers did. Why, I wonder, did Bushnell's office put out an announcement stating he was no longer attending this year's show? Where is the announcement from CGE? Why are they silent in this matter?

I'm reading too much into this, you say? Initially, yes. A few days ago, no. I saw a copy of Bushnell's announcement posted, but wasn't sure that it was the "official" one. So, I contacted Ms. Loni Reeder from Bushnell's office to get a copy, and perhaps some additional information pertaining to the cancelled appearance. Here's the letter I received in response:

Dana,

Thank you for your note and my apologies for not getting back to you sooner. Here is the announcement that was sent out (very brief):

<<Friday, June 4, 1999

Due to questionable actions on the part of one of the organizers of "Classic Gaming Expo 99," Nolan Bushnell will no longer be participating in, nor endorsing this year's event (scheduled to take place August 14th and 15th at the Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas).

Please feel free to contact me should you require additional information.>>

Please contact Mike Stulir at "Back in Time" ([backintime@emuclassics.com](mailto:backintime@emuclassics.com)), as a broadcast is in the works regarding this issue (of which I will be participating in).

Regards,

Loni Reeder

"Questionable actions"?? Something is certainly amiss! Something obviously occurred that soured some of the dignitaries planning to attend. The "cancelled appearances" list doesn't stop with Nolan Bushnell, although he was probably the headliner! Jerry Jessop, Curt Vendel, Loni Reeder, and Don Thomas have all pulled out of the show as of the time I've sat down to write this week's editorial. Who else might pull out between now and mid-August is up in the air.

And answer me this. Why is Loni Reeder, Nolan Bushnell's agent, participating in a 'Back in Time' broadcast pertaining to this issue? Why would someone of Bushnell's stature even bother? He's cancelled his appearance and he's not endorsing the show - why not walk away now and that would be the end of it. Something's definitely wrong with this picture.

How serious were these questionable actions? No one I've talked to has come right out and said what that might mean. Things have been implied and I'm able to read some things between the lines. It may be sour grapes. It has something to do with money and guests. It appears that some/all of the headliners were slighted. It sounds like one of the organizers had a lapse in common sense. It may be "worse"; I don't have all of the facts. But I do get the impression that at least one of the invited guests (a lesser name) balked at attending the show unless certain conditions were met. Those conditions may be something to the effect that "if you want me to attend the show, you're going to have to pay my way." That's my speculation, from what I've heard. And likely, people like Bushnell are attending out of the kindness of their heart. They may be paying their own way, or perhaps accepted modest accommodations that were offered, if offered.

As an organizer, you certainly don't bend under pressure from an invited guest. If that guest wants to attend, he or she will get there. They

should attend because they want to attend, not demand a free ride. As an organizer, what are your other invited guests going to think when they find out? I don't know about you, but I'd certainly be ticked off if I were one of the headliners of the show!

It's also my impression, that after last year's successful show, the organizers may have become complacent. Perhaps a little too cocky. The reason I say this is because last year we (we, as in the media) were constantly updated with information about the show, e-mails were answered readily, and the like. This year, hardly a thing. Most everything I've learned about this year's show has been through secondhand messages and by searching for news - and finding little. It's almost as if the organizers are resting on last year's laurels (deservedly so) and have resigned themselves to announcing another show this year and feeling that the masses will flock to it with little or no encouragement. It doesn't work that way folks! Coca Cola is the biggest soft drink name in the world. McDonalds is the biggest fast food chain in the world. Look at the money and advertising and promotion they put out year after year!

Who knows what effect Nolan Bushnell's cancellation and non-endorsement of this year's Classic Gaming Expo will have on attendance. My guess is that it will have some negative impact on attendance - especially to those potential attendees that didn't go last year but due to the positive feedback of last year's show and the opportunity to see and hear Bushnell would attract them this year. After all, Bushnell started it all.

As an Atari user from the days of Pong and the Atari VCS, I hope that this lapse in judgment doesn't hurt the show any more than it has. I hope that the organizers, both John Hardie and Keita Iida, can work in a positive fashion to repair the damage that's been caused. The Atari name, especially in the gaming circles, has created fond memories and continued friendships over the years. It would be a shame to see something tarnish that. We'll keep you informed as we learn more.

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!  
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NDL Partners with Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. to Offer NetImmerse for Next-Generation PlayStation

Numerical Design Ltd. (NDL) announced a partnership with Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (SCEI) to provide the NetImmerse 3D game engine for the next-generation PlayStation.

'NDL's NetImmerse is an important component of our middleware program, which is designed to make the next-generation PlayStation a great development platform," said Shinichi Okamoto, SCEI's Senior Vice President of Research & Development. "NetImmerse will allow developers to complete their titles much faster and take advantage of all of the power of the next-generation PlayStation."

''Developers can begin creating content on NetImmerse immediately and then move their titles smoothly over to the next-generation PlayStation when it becomes available," said John Austin, NDL's president. ''NetImmerse has proven itself as a leading engine in the PC market, and this is a strong first step in our multi-platform strategy."

The NetImmerse 3D game engine is a comprehensive set of software tools that can save approximately six months of development time and a year or more of engineering costs. It can be used for a wide variety of game styles.

Sony Develops New Laser Device For PlayStation

Sony Corp and subsidiary Sony Computer Entertainment Inc said on Tuesday they have developed a laser device for the PlayStation game machine that can read both digital video discs (DVDs) and compact discs (CDs).

Separate laser pickups have been needed needed to play DVDs and CDs, but the new pickup produces lasers in both wavelengths.

Sony Computer said in March it plans to launch the new PlayStation in Japan by this winter.

The new device will help reduce the number of components in CD/DVD drives and improve their reliability. It could also be used in DVD-ROM (digital video disc read-only memory) drives.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OMC GAMES DIVISION ANNOUNCES TWO NEW RPGs, "THE ASSASSIN" AND "AGE OF DARKNESS", FOR THE JAGUAR GAME CONSOLE AMONG OTHERS.

May 20, 1999 -- (Austin, TX) -- In what could be considered a bold move, OMC Games Division has officially announced two RPGs which will make their debut on the Jaguar game console, but has stated that there will definitely be an Atari 8-bit version of "The Assassin" as well as possible conversion onto a current mainstream console.

James Garvin, owner of OMC Games, states that the recent announcement by Hasbro Interactive during this years E3 in which it was stated that they have released all rights they may have concerning the Atari Jaguar, has removed all barriers that had confined developers in the past. He goes on to state, "Hasbro's announcement couldn't have come at a better time as it seemed like the Jaguar Community was on the verge of collapse. And though the Jaguar will never again be mainstream, I feel good to know that one more segment of the gaming industry is at peace. These guys fought hard to keep the Jaguar alive these past few years and it's my pleasure to give

something back. Now the encryption issue is settled we can make good on our promise to get these games out."

Both RPGs will feature 2D graphics which will rival other games currently on the market. Though impressive visuals will be secondary to their compelling stories and action oriented gameplay. "I think we're going to make a statement that Square and Enix aren't the only companies out there who can make great RPGs. We're making these games with the serious RPG gamer in mind. We have nothing to lose so we're pulling out all stops, and we don't need 'state of the art' hardware to do it," comments James Garvin.

The first to be released is "The Assassin", a sci-fi/fantasy detective story set in the futuristic-cyberpunk world of 2147. You take the role of Chicago detective Michael Steele, who sets out to solve the case of his life and find the murderers of his little brother. Set in the world of the soon-to-be-released paper RPG "Blood City", the player will visit major cities such as New York, Austin, Tokyo, Nagoya, Cairo, and London. The player will be able to gain new skills, build their reputation, go up levels, purchase well over 250 weapons, armor, and vehicles, and tackle a huge variety of subplots and cases. "The Assassin" gets its roots from the greats of Hong Kong cinema (John Woo, Tsui Hark, Chow Yun-Fat) so the player can expect larger than life shoot-outs and fantastic stunts. All in real-time. This is a game RPG fans will not want to miss.

OMC will follow "The Assassin" with "Age Of Darkness", a fantasy RPG set in the tormented world of Tannis. As seasoned adventurer Vorlan, you have to save the world from darkness only to find that nothing is what it seems. "Age Of Darkness" boasts what could be considered the largest game world in RPG history. Not only does the player explore a vast material world but also more than 6 planes of existence including the 666 Layers of the Abyss. The player will be able to get a job, advance levels, cast spells, and create custom equipment.

Both titles will appear on CD-ROM for the Jaguar CD console, while a special edition of "The Assassin" will be released for the Atari XL/XE on 5 1/4" floppies. While these games will appear on the Jaguar format first, a conversion is being looked at for one of the major mainstream consoles. The release date for "The Assassin" is tentatively 1st Qtr. 2000, with "Age Of Darkness" sometime later that year. All games will be professionally packaged, and rated by the ESRB.

CD-ROM Relives Block Graphic Times

Computer and game-console games today offer vividly detailed graphics and rich stereo sound, featuring nuanced characters in complex plots.

But it wasn't always that way.

Beginning in 1977 (yes, we had electricity and microprocessors even then) with the Atari Video Game Console, millions thrilled to arcade-style game cartridges with crude graphics. By 1980, Mattel Electronics had introduced Intellivision, and by 1982, Atari and Intellivision were in a combined 13 million homes.

A good way to relive those block-graphic times and have some fun is the CD-ROM Intellivision Lives! for both PC and Mac platforms.

Intellivision Lives! is a product of Intellivision Productions of Redondo Beach, Calif., a company formed by a couple of former Intellivision programmers, Keith Robinson and Stephen Roney, who bought the rights to the original Intellivision games.

In addition to the games themselves, the CD-ROM has a history about the rise - and subsequent fall - of Mattel Electronics. The jewel-case cover admits this "should be considered a subjective history by some of the people who designed the games. We're sure that others - such as our friends who were in Marketing or Administration - would tell the story differently."

Corporate where-did-we-go-wrong musings aside, the games speak for themselves. With more than 50 for a price of \$29.95, this is a good value for those who want to see what was thought entertaining in the late '70s and early '80s - or for those who want to see it again, this time with no static about finishing your homework.

Besides the sports titles, the games include Utopia, Sea Battle, Astrosmash and Night Stalker. The CD-ROM also includes video clips and unreleased Intellivision games.

Installation was smooth, and the user interface is slick. Using the PC keyboard instead of the game console takes a bit of getting used to, but not much.

And the games, compared with today's productions, are very simple. On the other hand, they don't require intense study and-or clue sheets. Today's games are so involved that when they arrive for review, the press packages routinely include "reviewer guides," aka "cheat sheets," for puzzled journalists who don't have a couple of months to work out the solutions on their own.

System requirements for Intellivision Lives! for the PC are Windows 95 or 98, a 90 megahertz Pentium or better, eight megabytes of RAM and an eight-speed CD-ROM. For the Mac, 16 megabytes of RAM, Power Macintosh, OS 7.5, eight-speed CD-ROM. The software is available on the Internet at www.intellivisionlives.com.

Introduction to Most Famous Adventure Game of All Time Creates Whole New Generation of Fans

Initial Print Run of Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Game Boxed Set Sells Out

Twenty-five years ago, TSR Inc. created a legend with the release of the Dungeons & Dragons game.

Now, redesigned for a new generation, the Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Game boxed set is the definitive starting point to the adventure game hobby. Newcomers to the game can participate in adventures and explore fantasy worlds already enjoyed by millions of fans worldwide.

Released at the end of April, the starter-level boxed set was overwhelmingly received by fans and sold out of its initial print run to hobby game stores in less than two months. After a return to the presses, stores nationwide are gearing up to replenish their supply of the Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Game with the arrival of new product next week.

For 25 years Dungeons & Dragons products have been the benchmark for adventure game excellence. These games have appealed to the ever-expanding population of fans because the focus is not on fierce competition, but on imagination and communal storytelling.

The Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Game was designed by Bill Slavicsek, author of A Guide to the Star Wars Universe (Del Rey) and the Alternity adventure game. The boxed set includes clearly written rules designed to familiarize new players with the Dungeons & Dragons experience, as well as everything players need to continue on to more involved gaming. The Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Game, released in April 1999 with a suggested retail price of \$9.99, is played with the same methods and rules as the original Dungeons & Dragons game, but with less complexity.

Introduced in 1974, the original Dungeons & Dragons game continues to be played by millions worldwide and has led to the creation of the billion-dollar adventure game industry. The game provides rules for interacting in a group-driven, storytelling experience in a fantasy world filled with magic, fierce dragons and brave knights.

PlayStation Exclusive STAR OCEAN The Second Story Offers Endless Sea of Possibilities for RPG Gamers

Sony Computer Entertainment America announced today the release of STAR OCEAN The Second Story, an expansive role-playing game (RPG) available exclusively for the PlayStation game console.

Developed by Enix, the makers of the legendary Dragon Quest series (known as Dragon Warrior in North America), STAR OCEAN The Second Story offers the most vast, detailed RPG experience ever created, featuring real-time polygonal battles, more than 100 hours of exploration and challenges and a host of optional mini-events that determine the game's more than 80 possible endings.

STAR OCEAN The Second Story challenges gamers to take on an integral role in the development of the storyline, game events and ending, offering a seemingly endless sea of possibilities. Fight sequences feature innovative real-time polygonal battles during which players can create their own custom combo moves, resulting in a more interactive combat experience.

Throughout their travels players discover a host of mini-events, called "Private Actions," which have an actual effect on the main storyline and can ultimately change the end of the game. Players progress through worlds by using the "Skill System," acquiring the skills to create items from raw materials through cooking, alchemy, metalwork, compounding and more.

STAR OCEAN The Second Story also features a "Double Hero" system, allowing gamers to choose to play as the male protagonist or the female lead, and offers gorgeous CG (computer graphics) sequences to dramatically tie the storyline together. Players collect more than 1,000 items as they explore the game's vast, wide-open worlds.

STAR OCEAN The Second Story delivers intricate, detailed gameplay designed down to the smallest detail for an intensely satisfying RPG experience.

"STAR OCEAN The Second Story is a true gamer's game, offering a

challenging and immersive gaming experience that will draw in all types of players," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America.

"We are truly thrilled to have a company with the incredible heritage and experience that Enix brings producing games for the PlayStation game console -- this exceptional title strengthens PlayStation's position as the leading platform for RPG enthusiasts."

Capcom To Make Biohazard Game For Sega, Nintendo

Japan's Capcom Co Ltd said on Tuesday it would sell its popular Biohazard game software series, originally developed for Sony Corp's PlayStation game consoles, for use on Sega Enterprises Ltd's Dreamcast and Nintendo Co Ltd's Nintendo64.

This would mark the first time the developer of home game software modified titles originally intended for the PlayStation console for use on Dreamcast or Nintendo64, a Capcom official said.

Capcom will begin sales of Biohazard for Dreamcast sometime next winter, although the company has not decided when it will start selling the game software for Nintendo64, he said.

Capcom intends to continue the strategy of diversifying its game platforms in order to make the best use of its software resources, he said.

The company has shipped 11 million units of Biohazard series games.

Capcom shares rose 170 yen or 7.98 percent to 2,300 during the morning session.

Destruction Derby Crashes Onto Nintendo 64

Stock car racing meets demolition derby mayhem in the debut of "Destruction Derby" (working title) for the Nintendo 64 game system.

Game publisher, THQ Inc., announces a licensing deal with Psygnosis, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc., and renowned game developer, Looking Glass Studios, to bring one of the hottest franchises in collision-based racing to the N64 just in time for the 1999 holiday season.

"Teaming up with Psygnosis and Looking Glass in bringing this proven brand to millions of N64 enthusiasts is a clear fit for THQ," said Mike Rubinelli, vice president, product development, THQ. "Fans of the Destruction Derby series will revel in an all new game featuring new multi-player modes like 'capture the flag' and a 2-to-4 multi-player split screen option."

"The Destruction Derby franchise is famous for huge, multi-car smash-ups and fast action racing," stated Erik Gloerson, managing director, Looking Glass Studios, console division. "Our goal is to build on that intensity with larger and varying race environments, a reward system including

numerous production vehicles and unique play modes -- who could resist playing a game of 'hot potato' with up to ten other moving vehicles?"

Initially, racers will choose from twelve stock cars as they race among a pack of four vehicles against two other packs of vehicles. Competitors actually race through each other in this off-beat racing game as the two other packs of racers will be moving in the opposite direction on the course.

Players will be rewarded as they advance through the tracks and additional, production-style vehicles can be selected. With improved graphics, more vehicles, tracks and arenas, and all new play modes, ''Destruction Derby" takes all the explosive action of the original to the next level for racing and N64 enthusiasts alike.

The Destruction Derby series has won tremendous success with two installments on both PC and PlayStation platforms. Destruction Derby 1&2 for the PlayStation sold over 2.2 million units worldwide. Destruction Derby 1&2 for the PC sold in excess of 650,000 units worldwide.

Sega Dreamcast has Record-Breaking Retail Pre-Order Campaign

K B Toys Signs On To Support Pre-Order Campaign
For Sega Dreamcast Launch On September 9, 1999

Sega of America Inc. announced the participation of retailer K B Toys in the official U.S. consumer pre-order campaign for Sega Dreamcast -- ''the ultimate gaming machine," bringing the most advanced and realistic video gameplay ever developed to consumers.

KB Toys will be accepting pre-orders for the system both at retail and online at www.kbtoys.com. With still three months to go before the launch of Sega Dreamcast, the company joins five other retailers who have already secured 100,000 consumer pre-orders for the 128-bit videogame system and are expected to reach more than 200,000 by the release date on September 9, 1999.

Available in more than 15,000 retail store fronts on its launch date, and with more than 10,000 consumers lining up to place pre-orders for the system on a weekly basis, Sega Dreamcast is headed for the largest launch in the history of videogames.

Sega's pre-order campaign has already eclipsed Sony's 1995 pre-order drive for Sony Playstation, when Sony reached only 100,000 pre-orders total prior to their U.S. launch. Answering the demand to experience Sega Dreamcast, there will be 6,000 interactive kiosks at retail by launch so consumers can try games and see the system first hand.

''K B Toys is dedicated to supporting Sega Dreamcast and offering the first-ever home entertainment console with Internet capabilities," said Chris Gilbert, senior vice president of sales, Sega of America. ''Not only is K B Toys the nation's largest mall-based retailer, but Sega's core gamer shops at K B Toys, looking for the most advanced and realistic gameplay currently available on the market."

Fueling the fire of excitement at retail is Sega Dreamcast's announced price point of \$199, including a 56K modem, providing Internet connectivity

and four times the graphics processing power of a Pentium II chip at a very aggressive price.

Sega Dreamcast will also be the only new videogame system on the market this holiday season, a point not lost on retailers who traditionally make a significant portion of their sales during the fourth quarter.

"Sega Dreamcast has established itself as the must-have product of the holiday season," said James Mackenzie, divisional merchandise manager -- video of K B Toys. "We couldn't be more pleased about the reaction we have seen from consumers and the dedication we have seen from Sega to make the system a retail winner."

Sega Dreamcast will have 15 games available at launch, with the number growing to 30 by the December holidays. First and third-party titles now in the works will bring the total Sega Dreamcast game library count to more than 100 by the end of 2000.

Sega Dreamcast is also the first console to offer network capability. The 56K modem, which is packed in the box, will give the system full networked functionality, allowing consumers to play games over the Internet and giving them access to Internet capabilities, including e-mail, chat and browsing of the World Wide Web.

Along with its aggressive price point, Sega Dreamcast will achieve other industry firsts at launch. Its advanced 128-bit architecture makes it the first console with evolutionary capabilities, allowing it to grow and change to match advances in technology and the needs and desires of the consumer. Sega Dreamcast is also the most powerful video game console ever created.

It is 15 times more powerful than a Sony PlayStation and ten times more powerful than a Nintendo 64. In addition, Sega Dreamcast is the first console to utilize hand-held gaming through its Visual Memory Unit (VMU), which allows players to swap games with friends in the home, arcade or head-to-head using two VMUs.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

E-Mails Provide Glimpse Of Microsoft Plan

A string of e-mails sent earlier this year provided a glimpse of Microsoft Corp's strategy to contain undesirable press reports, evidence at the company's antitrust trial showed Friday.

The government and 19 states allege that Microsoft used monopoly power to compete unfairly against Netscape Communications software used to browse the World Wide Web.

The government has offered evidence in an effort to show that Microsoft's allegedly illegal tactics boosted its Internet Explorer browser and snatched away market share from Netscape's competing product. Early this year, Microsoft tried to find an answer to that evidence that would play well in the press.

"What data can we find right away that shows Netscape browser share is still healthy?" wrote Microsoft spokesman Greg Shaw on Jan. 5 in an internal company e-mail, noting the government quoted studies showing Netscape's share had dropped to a paltry 20 percent.

"It would help if you could send me some reports showing their marketshare health and holding," wrote Shaw of Netscape. "This is for press purposes."

But Microsoft's Robert Bennett balked: "All the analysts have pretty much come to the conclusion, which is that (Netscape) share is declining and (Internet Explorer) is gaining."

In fact, Bennett said, "We are winning because we have better technology," and should be making that point publicly.

Another Microsoft employee suggested Bennett should learn to think differently. "Rob this is for the trial so let's provide the more negative analysts to Greg so he can source counterpoints," wrote Yusef Mehdi.

For all its trouble, Microsoft was unable to come up with very much data to counter the government.

After the e-mail came out at the trial Friday, Microsoft spokesman Mark Murray was asked Microsoft's position on market share.

"We have never disputed that Netscape's browser share is declining," Murray said. "We believe Netscape's browser share is going down because we're building a better product and we're doing a more effective job of marketing our technology."

At the trial Friday, Massachusetts Institute Technology professor Franklin Fisher testified that the reason Internet Explorer was winning was because Microsoft had foreclosed competition.

That meant, he said, that Microsoft had occupied the most effective channels for distribution, by bundling the browser with its dominant Windows operating system, and raised the costs to its rival, Netscape, by forcing it to distribute through less efficient channels such as the mail and downloads on the Web.

Thursday, Fisher conceded under cross-examination by a Microsoft lawyer that Microsoft rival Netscape Communications may have had greater market penetration than claimed earlier by a Netscape executive, James Barksdale.

But under examination by government lawyer David Boies -- and with the help of additional review of Barksdale's statements that provided more depth about his views -- Fisher said that Barksdale had actually not been exaggerating.

Fisher concluded his testimony later in the day. The trial continues Monday with IBM employee Garry Norris, who will be the first employee of a personal computer maker to testify for the government.

IBM Witness Backs Allegation Of Microsoft Leverage

Microsoft used its monopoly power to try to pry IBM away from its own software products, an IBM employee testified Monday, supporting the government's main antitrust charge against the software superpower.

The federal government and 19 states allege that Microsoft illegally used its monopoly position in the Windows operating system for personal computers to maintain that monopoly and gain advantage in other business areas.

For IBM that meant pressuring it to stop shipping computers with its own OS/2 operating system and a series of business programs that competed with Microsoft Office.

"They repeatedly used the (computer maker) relationship to apply pressure," said Garry Norris, who was International Business Machines Corp.'s primary negotiator with Microsoft Corp. in the mid-1990s.

Company memos and letters tendered in court also offered dramatic new insight into Microsoft's tactics.

In his trial testimony, Norris said much of the drama took place in 1995, as Microsoft was preparing to release Windows 95.

In addition to wanting IBM to drop OS/2, Microsoft wanted IBM to drop Lotus SmartSuite, a competing suite of office software.

In March 1995, Microsoft Chief Bill Gates asked Joachim Kempin, the top Microsoft executive in charge of personal computer makers, if SmartSuite "should become an issue in our global relationship with IBM."

Wrote back Kempin: "I am willing to do whatever it takes to kick them out." Kempin said that the personal computer maker "relationship should be used to apply some pressure."

In June of 1995, IBM purchased Lotus and on July 17 announced that it would make Lotus SmartSuite its primary desktop offering.

Three days later, Microsoft cut off negotiations for IBM to obtain Windows 95. On July 24, Gates himself was on the phone with IBM. Norris was in the room and said he could hear what Gates was saying because "it was pretty loud."

"He was complaining about SmartSuite, the audit and competing with OS/2," testified Norris.

An accounting firm was conducting an audit because IBM had underpaid Microsoft for software and both sides wanted to know how much IBM owed.

Norris testified that Microsoft's Kempin offered to settle the underpayment problem if IBM would agree not to compete on SmartSuites for awhile.

Norris's testimony was backed by an Aug. 11, 1995, e-mail from IBM's Tony Santelli, his boss. Santelli described an Aug. 9, 1995, phone conversation he had had with Kempin.

''Joachim offered to accept a single payment and close all outstanding audits," wrote Santelli. ''He suggested IBM not bundle Lotus SmartSuite on our system for a minimum of six months to one year."

But IBM did not want to stop shipping its own products to make life easier for Microsoft, and insisted that Microsoft drop the linkage.

''Each day that IBM has to wait for the Windows 95 code, IBM is at a competitive disadvantage," complained IBM's Santelli in a letter to Kempin on Aug. 21.

But Microsoft did not yield, and IBM was unable to sign an agreement to receive Windows 95 until 15 minutes before the new operating system was released in late August.

''We were impacted measurably," testified Norris. ''There was a lot of pent-up demand for Windows 95. We missed the initial spurt of demand, we missed the back-to-school season. And we were late to the Christmas market, as well, which is our biggest quarter."

After that, Norris said, IBM knew it had to improve the relationship with Microsoft.

Norris testified it was hopeless for IBM to try to go it alone with its own operating system. He conducted an analysis that found ''we would lose 70 percent to 90 percent of volume" by relying on OS/2 alone.

''There was no place to go without Windows 95," Norris said. ''We couldn't be in the PC business."

After that, Microsoft had its way with IBM on pricing and other issues, Norris testified. For example, in 1996 Microsoft gave IBM a take-it-or-leave-it offer that raised some prices and IBM had to say yes, Norris said. As part of that agreement, IBM was forced to drop an introductory ''screen," seen by new users when they opened the computer box, that it had developed at a cost of millions of dollars, he said.

Microsoft contends it does not hold a monopoly in the personal computer operating system market, but Norris said he was told otherwise by a Microsoft employee, Mark Baber.

Norris said that Baber, his primary contact at Microsoft, told him: ''Where else are you going to go? This is the only game in town."

Microsoft President Steve Ballmer Monday denied his company had tried to exclude OS/2 from the market in talks with IBM. "We didn't try to push out OS/2 in any sense in the negotiations we had with IBM," Ballmer said in an interview on CNBC television.

Microsoft Pressured IBM To Cut Netscape

An IBM employee testified at Microsoft Corp.'s antitrust trial Tuesday that the software giant conditioned discounts on its products on IBM dropping a rival Internet browser made by Netscape.

International Business Machines Corp. employee Garry Norris said he was so surprised by the demand on March 6, 1997, that Netscape be left off IBM

personal computers that he put three large asterisks as he made notes on the conversation.

''This was the first time I heard them say directly to us they wanted us to not load Netscape," Norris testified under questioning from a Justice Department lawyer.

The Justice Department and 19 states accuse Microsoft Corp. of using monopoly power in personal computer operating systems to gain share in other areas, such as the market for Web browsers to peruse the Internet.

Microsoft engaged in a bitter battle with Netscape Communications for dominance in the browser market.

Norris was IBM's lead negotiator with Microsoft. His notes -- all introduced as evidence -- recount his conversation with Microsoft representative Bengt Akerlind.

''Can move forward to jointly promote (Microsoft's Internet Explorer) exclusively. If not, MDA repercussions," Norris' notes also said. The ''repercussions" meant IBM could lose discounts offered through Microsoft's Market Development Agreement (MDA) for customers, Norris said.

Norris heard the same demand to drop Netscape again a few weeks later at a meeting on March 27, 1997.

IBM and Microsoft met in a large meeting and then in a smaller meeting that Norris said Microsoft had termed "secret."

''The first thing they said was, 'We have a problem if you load Netscape,'" testified Norris, referring to his notes, which showed those as Akerlind's words.

Norris said that Microsoft insisted that IBM should not load software from companies other than Microsoft, but encouraged IBM to load a whole series of Microsoft programs, including Web browsers, word processors and finance programs.

''If we were not willing to do some of the preloads ... there would be repercussions," testified Akerlind. A "preload" is the software included when a personal computer is sold.

Government lawyer Phil Malone also asked Norris about an Oct. 30, 1997, e-mail from Microsoft's Bill Gates, who had written of IBM: ''They continue to use their PCs to distribute things against us." Norris said that viewpoint was consistent with what he heard from Microsoft representatives.

Microsoft Lawyer Questions Government Witness

A Microsoft lawyer tried to shake the testimony of a key government witness at the software giant's antitrust trial Wednesday, but appeared to make little progress and irritated the judge more than once.

Garry Norris, International Business Machines Corp.'s lead negotiator with Microsoft Corp., said earlier this week that Microsoft tried to get IBM to eliminate or reduce shipments of IBM's personal computer operating system and ship Microsoft's Windows instead.

Microsoft lawyer Rick Pepperman challenged Norris' allegations that Microsoft had offered discounts of \$8 for each copy of Windows 95 if IBM would agree to the elimination of IBM's OS/2.

The discounts would have been worth \$40 million to \$48 million annually to IBM because it sold 4 million to 5 million PCs a year, Norris said.

'Show me the reductions," Pepperman said.

Norris pointed to the items that he said met the criteria in a written offer from Microsoft, including a \$1 reduction per copy of Windows if IBM would mention only Windows, and not OS/2, in its advertising.

Microsoft offered a further \$3 reduction if IBM would "adopt Windows 95 as the standard operating system for IBM," and several other conditions.

Pepperman asked: "There is no requirement that (IBM) stop shipping OS/2 there, is there?"

"The word 'requirement' is not written. But these activities, once executed, have the effect of killing OS/2 in the market," Norris said.

Norris said that if customers saw IBM advertising only Microsoft's Windows 95, instead of IBM's own operating system, "the effect is to believe" that IBM has "stopped shipping an operating system."

IBM rejected the offer because it was not willing to kill OS/2, Norris has testified.

At another point, Microsoft's Pepperman showed Norris a news report concerning an IBM document that said IBM's OS/2 was superior to Windows 95.

"Are you familiar with the document?" asked Pepperman about the white paper.

"I haven't seen it so I don't know" replied Norris.

But Pepperman pressed for an answer without showing Norris the document. Finally, District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson cut off the questioning.

"Mr. Pepperman, show him the document, if you've got it," said the judge, with irritation in his voice. Pepperman offered the document. Norris said had never seen it.

Pepperman and the judge crossed swords one more time. At noon, Judge Jackson asked Pepperman to end his questioning at a convenient time so they could take an early lunch.

In the past, that has been a signal for lawyers to stop questioning immediately, but Pepperman persisted for more than 10 minutes.

Finally, Jackson interrupted Pepperman in the middle of a question: "I think we'll take the afternoon recess now."

Later, Pepperman sought to attack Norris' testimony from earlier this week that Microsoft had pressured IBM to drop the Netscape Navigator Web browser from IBM PCs. That would have left only the rival Microsoft Web browser on IBM PCs.

Pepperman pointed to a memo written by IBM employee Scott Bosworth on April 21, 1997, a few weeks after Norris left his assignment as chief negotiator for IBM to Microsoft.

``There is no proposal on the table from Microsoft to exclusively bundle" the Microsoft Web browser with IBM PCs, Bosworth wrote. Norris said he did not know about that memo.

In response, government lawyer Phil Malone pointed to other documents in which IBM's Bosworth noted that IBM paid higher royalties to Microsoft than other PC makers and that Microsoft had made it clear there would be advantageous for IBM to drop Netscape.

Princeton professor Edward Felten will testify for the government Thursday.

Judge Joins Questioning At Microsoft Trial

The judge in the Microsoft antitrust trial questioned a government expert witness Thursday, asking if there was a drawback to building an Internet Web browser into the Windows operating system.

``Are there any security issues involved in the choice of a browser or whether to get a browser at all?" District Court Judge Thomas Jackson asked Prof. Edward Felten, who heads the Secure Internet Programming Laboratory at Princeton University.

``Doesn't the browser increase the risk of penetration by a virus?" asked the judge.

Felten, a prominent expert on Internet security issues, said that was indeed a problem, especially in industry.

Microsoft -- facing charges that it illegally used its monopoly in computer operating systems to dominant the market for software to browse the Web -- has argued that a browser integrated into the operating system offers advantages to consumers.

In his reply Thursday to Judge Jackson, Felten said: ``If you're a corporate system administrator concerned that inexperienced users might accidentally download a virus, you might well choose not to have a browser in order to prevent that means of spreading a virus."

At present, all Microsoft Corp. Windows operating systems come with a built-in browser.

Earlier in the trial, the government introduced testimony from Scott Vesey of the Boeing Co., who said his firm wanted to purchase a recent version of Windows without a browser but was unable to do so.

Jackson wanted to know more broadly if there were anything else that could be done to protect computers.

``Is there any way of absolutely assuring security?" asked Judge Jackson.

``There is no way," Felten said. ``There is no foolproof security device."

The Justice Department and 19 states allege that Microsoft has illegally abused monopoly power it holds in the Windows operating system.

In particular, the government says that Microsoft competed unfairly against Netscape Communications in the bitter battle over dominance for Web browsers. Netscape was purchased by America Online Inc. in November.

By that time, Microsoft was selling Windows with what it said was an integrated browser. Microsoft has argued that the browser cannot be removed without breaking the system.

But Felten testified, as he has in the past, that he was able to remove the browser and offered CD-ROMs as exhibits with his programs to do so.

European Internet Boycott Called

European Internet users, campaigning to reduce local telephone charges, called a 24-hour boycott of the World Wide Web on Sunday.

The Campaign for Unmetered Telecommunications says Internet users in 15 European countries have coordinated efforts to win a reduction in costs, including a flat-rate charge for local calls, similar to that in the United States.

The campaign, which ran a similar boycott Jan. 31 with seven countries participating, also asked all telephone users to join the one-day strike.

The primary goal for Web surfers, who pay by the minute for their European local calls, is introduction of unmetered charges for connections to an Internet service provider using a telephone modem ''to enable everyone who wants to access the Internet without incurring open-ended costs."

British Telecom Internet Plan this week announced it was introducing a toll-free weekend access number for subscribers to its plan, who pay a monthly subscription fee.

The campaign welcomed the decision, but said Wednesday that users were still tied to a single Internet service provider, ''as with all 'free' offers so far."

The countries where Internet users were participating in Sunday's boycott, the campaign says, are Austria, Belgium, Britain, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

New E-Mail Computer Virus Reported

A new computer virus was spreading across the Internet Thursday, infecting machines by e-mail like the recent Melissa virus - but causing more damage by ruining computer files.

Anti-virus teams in the government and at universities were trying to determine the severity of the outbreak of ''Worm.Explore.Zip," a virus

that arrives by e-mail with an attached file that can infect a computer. Numerous software companies issued warnings about the virus.

It wasn't immediately clear how many machines or networks had been stricken so far. MSNBC reported that the virus was "causing havoc with e-mail at Microsoft, NBC and General Electric," the parent companies of the Internet news service.

Virus experts would only say that the volume of calls reporting problems was substantially higher than normal.

"We've had 10 first-hand reports of sites that have been infected and a substantial numbers of second-hand reports," said Shawn Hernan, a team leader at the Computer Emergency Response Team at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

"Our belief right now is that it's spreading fairly quickly within a site but not as quickly from site to site," Hernan said, noting that his team is working with an anti-virus group in the Department of Defense to contain the outbreak.

"We do know that some sites have taken their electronic mail systems off line to slow the spread of the infection."

Trend Micro, a maker of anti-virus software, said "five large customers with names you would know" reported Thursday that their systems were infected. Trend Micro declined to name the companies affected.

Worm.Explore.Zip arrives with a friendly message: "Hi (Recipient Name)! I received your email and I shall send you a reply ASAP. Till then, take a look at the attached zipped docs."

The virus actually isn't dangerous unless the computer opens the "zipped docs," a term referring to a compressed file sent along with the e-mail. By opening that file, a computer user inadvertently activates the virus.

The virus then worms its way into the computer user's e-mail program and sends a copy of itself to the address of any e-mail that subsequently arrives.

It also hunts through a computer's hard drive and deletes the information in files created by popular software, including the word processor Microsoft Word and the spreadsheet program Microsoft Excel.

"The payload on this virus is more destructive than the Melissa payload was," said Bill Pollak, spokesman for the Computer Emergency Response Team. But, he added, "It's too soon to be able to say" how much damage the virus has caused.

The virus is the third to draw national attention since late March, when the Melissa virus overwhelmed computer networks with floods of e-mail. A more damaging virus named Chernobyl struck in late April, but did most of its harm overseas.

S3 To Launch Graphics Chips For Notebook Computers

S3 Inc., a maker of computer graphics chips, will announce Monday two new

chips for the portable PC market that will enable both video gamers and business users to have better graphics on the road.

S3 will announce two new versions of its popular Savage graphics accelerator chip, called the Savage/MX and Savage/IX, in its latest bid to regain lost share of the graphics market.

The new chips will provide faster and more realistic three-dimensional graphics for notebooks, where so far the market for graphics is smaller than desktop PCs. Graphics chips usually consume more power, a key issue in mobile computing.

''We have a very low power-consuming product," said Kenneth Potashner, president, CEO and chairman of S3, adding that many video games, such as Quake, which could not previously run well on notebooks, will now run three times faster.

In February, the Santa Clara, Calif.-based company announced a new graphics chip called the Savage4, in a major comeback attempt for the company, which once lead the desktop graphics chip market. It now has many major customers for this chip, including three of the top five PC makers like IBM Corp.

''A company that was under pressure and stress now has a path to success with the Savage chip," Potashner, who joined S3 last November, said.
''This announcement is the next phase of that. We are now going to expand it to the notebook market."

Currently, some of the main contenders in the estimated \$430 million portable graphics chip market are NeoMagic Corp. and ATI Technologies Inc.

''We have gone from an uninteresting portable accelerator market to a much more competitive market this year," said Dean McCarron, an analyst at Mercury Research in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Potashner said that S3 expects to begin producing its new Savage chips in the third quarter, with volume production in the fourth quarter of this year.

''Once we are in volume (mobile) should constitute 20-25 percent of our total revenue base," he said.

Savage/MX will be priced at \$42, and Savage/IX is priced at \$49 for a four megabyte version, \$56 for an eight megabyte version and \$68 for a 16 megabyte version, all in quantities of 1,000 units.

Microsoft Set To Launch Office 2000

Microsoft Corp. is set to unveil Monday its Office 2000 software that will shift the focus of the work desktop from paper to the Internet, in an upgrade of Microsoft's widely used suite of applications already installed on 60 million computers.

''It's important because it's the latest incarnation in the of the most important products in the Microsoft revenue stream," said Cowan & Co. analyst Andrew Brosseau.

But he added that it will not light a fire under Microsoft's earnings as

quickly as previous upgrades. Hanging over the release of the Office suite are two big "2000 factors" -- the much-awaited Y2K changeover, which has thrown a chill through the high-tech industry fearful that systems will be baffled by the "00" on reference to the year.

More important to Microsoft's Redmond, Wash. campus is the Windows 2000 launch, due by the end of this year. The long-delayed new operating system is the first since Windows 95, and it's likely to cool off potential software buyers who will wait for that upgrade before adding the new Office suite.

"Our survey work shows a lot of interest among organizations in upgrading to the Office and Windows 2000, but it's going to be done more slowly than in the past," said Cowen's Brosseau.

The new Office 2000 software includes applications that are widely used by large and small businesses, the most important being, Microsoft Word, for word processing, and Excel, for number crunching.

On top of those basic functions, Microsoft has built a wide range of related office-oriented software ranging from its widely-used PowerPoint, for making presentations to forms for letters.

The main upgrade of the Office system makes the system more attractive as companies link more of their functions to the Internet. The existing Office 97 software "gets along with the Internet, but it treats Web-based documents as second-class citizens, giving precedence to the paper-based output," said PC Magazine, in a recent review of the new product.

With the new version "you may have trouble telling where Office 2000 ends and the Web begins," it said.

The software follows through on Microsoft chairman Bill Gates's plan to link all of the company's products intimately with the Internet, using HTML, or hypertext markup language, the standard form of communications on the Web, becoming the "native language" of Microsoft Office.

The new personal computer products are being created to work along with a Microsoft e-commerce system, a back office computer server system launched, with much fanfare, early this year in San Francisco by Gates. That system was launched in the midst of growing criticism about the personal computer software company's ability to keep up with the fast-growing Web.

"I think Office 2000 will show that Microsoft is evolving very well into an Internet company. It's an ongoing process, and in a lot of ways they were already a Web company," said Scott McAdams, president of Seattle-based brokerage McAdams Wright Regan.

The new Office 2000 launch will be presided over by President Steve Ballmer, Gates's formidable No. 2., the hard-driving executive who has taken over more of the reins of the software giant's day-to-day operations in the past year. The launch will take place in San Francisco.

Microsoft Quietly Launches Windows 98 Upgrade

Windows 98 Second Edition, a modest upgrade to Microsoft Corp.'s main operating system for consumers, goes on sale Thursday, incorporating bug

fixes and other updates to the software launched a year ago.

The upgrade of the leading personal computer software, available on disk for \$19.95 to licensed Windows 98 users, adds hardware updates, a new Web browser and other features, most of which already are available free over the Internet.

The product also offers several features not available elsewhere, including Internet connection sharing, which allows two or more computers in a home to use a single Internet connection simultaneously.

The feature is aimed at the growing number of homes with high-speed Internet connections, said Mike Nichols, a Microsoft product manager.

Windows 98 was launched with fanfare in June 1998 and was itself considered only a modest upgrade to the successful Windows 95 version of the operating system launched in August 1995.

Windows 98, with its new browser-like interface, quickly became the standard for consumer machines, and more than 45 million copies have been sold, including several million upgrade copies snapped up by consumers at stores.

The latest upgrade may appeal to consumers who want to avoid the hassle of downloading the many separate bug fixes and drivers as well as the new Internet Explorer version 5.0 Web browser, said Rob Enderle, an analyst with Giga Information Group.

"If you've got newer hardware, it's a nice way to sync up and make sure you've got the latest and the greatest," he said. "New computer buyers should absolutely request the new edition."

In a largely positive review of a test version of the software, PC World Online concluded that "Internet connection sharing may be the only compelling reason to update to Second Edition."

The software also will be available to users of Windows 95 and older versions of Windows for about \$90 at retail stores, the same price as the original Windows 98.

Microsoft plans another, more substantial upgrade to the operating system next year, Nichols said.

The software giant is pushing businesses to buy its more expensive and more stable Windows NT family of products, including the forthcoming Windows 2000 system, scheduled to be released by the end of this year.

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